DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 299 181 SO 019 305

AUTHOR Scupin, Raymond
TITLE Education and Development for Muslims in Thailand.
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 35p.; Paper presented at the Conference of the Association of Asian Studies (San Francisco, CA, March 25-27, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Asian Studies; *Buddhism; Cultural Influences; *Educational Policy; Educational Principles; Educational Theories; Foreign Countries; *Government School Relationship; *Islamic Culture; Majority Attitudes; Minority Group Influences; *Modernization; Politics of Education; Religion; Religious Differences; Religious Factors; Traditionalism
IDENTIFIERS *Muslims; *Thailand

ABSTRACT

This paper considers the consequences that modernization has had on Islamic education in Thailand among the minority Muslim population. The major themes include: (1) an account of how modern secular developments were incorporated and combined with political policies established by Thai authorities as a nation-building device; (2) the consequences of new educational policies on traditional Islamic educational institutions in Thailand; and (3) an overview of the pluralistic and nationalistic tendencies that have influenced education and economic development and created tensions between Buddhists and Muslims. The paper concludes that secularization and modernization have engendered both pluralistic and monolithic assimilation tendencies and created problems for Islamic educational development, especially since official Thai policy continues to be determined by Buddhist ideology. A 25-item bibliography is included. (JHP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED299181

Education and Development for Muslims in Thailand

by

Raymond Scupin
Sociology/Anthropology Department
Lindenwood College

*This essay is prepared for the Association of Asian Studies Conference in San Francisco. March 25-27. Please do not quote without author's permission.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

RAYMOND SCUPIN

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

SO 019 305

"At all events, religion must not be made into a barrier, separating men's spirits from God-given abilities in the knowledge of the truths of the contingent world as far as in them lies. Rather, religion must promote this very search, demanding respect for evidence and enjoining the utmost possible devotion and endeavour through all the worlds of knowledge - and all within the true proportions of the goal, holding fast thje while to do despite to it which the Lord of the worlds will not forgive....

How then can reason be denied its right, being, as it is, the scrutineer of evidences so as to reach the truth within them and know that it is Divinely given? Having, however, once recognised the mission of a prophet, reason is obliged to acknowledge all that he brings, even though unable to attain the essential meaning within it or penetrate its full truth. Yet this obligation does not involve reason in accepting rational impossibilities such as two incompatibles or opposites together at the same time and point. For prophecies are immune from bringing such follies. But if there comes something which appears contradictory, reason must believe that the apparent is not the intended sense. It is then free to seek the true sense by reference to the rest of the prophet's message in whom the ambiguity occurred, or to fall back upon God and His omniscience. There have been those among our forebears who have chosen to do either one or the other..." Muhammad Abduh on 'Islam, Reason, and Civilization' from the <u>The Theology of Unity</u>, (Esposito and Donohue 1982).

The above statement by a well-known Islamic religious reformer and official in Egypt represents the modernist attempt to combine 'reason' and 'faith' in Muslim thought. The statement was made during the first stages of the penetration of the Western economic and political forces into the Islamic world. Although as pointed out in Abduh's statement earlier Muslim religious thinkers such as the famed Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd had attempted the reconciliation of faith and reason in Islam, this issue became extremely critical when Western economic and political forces began to have direct consequences for the

Muslim world. Secular western ideals, science, and other aspects of 'modernization' were in conflict with traditional Islamic thought. Abduh and other modernists were familiar with Western ideals and science and were attempting to realign the language and ideology of Islam to demonstrate that the Muslim faith did not offer any obstacles in the modernization of these non-western regions.

The modernist or Muslim reformist movements of the early twentieth century which emerged in the Near East spread throughout the Islamic world in Southeast Asia. These modernist trends have been discussed by many Western scholars dealing with the predominant Islamic areas of Southeast Asia such as Indonesia (Geertz 1960, Peacock 1978, Noer 1973, Federspiel 1970, Siegal 1969), and Malaysia (Roff 1970, Nagata 1980, 1984). In Southeast Asia, as in the Near East, these Islamic modernist trends corresponded with the global impact of Western colonialism, imperialism, and modernization. The modernist movements have had a definitive effect on the shape on the character of Islamic educational institutions in Southeast Asia.

This essay will survey the consequences that modernization has had on Islamic education in Thailand among the minority Muslim population. It will begin with a brief account of how modern secular developments were incorporated and combined with political polices as a nation-building device by Thai authorities. I then describe the

consequences of these new educational policies on the traditional Islamic educational institutions in southern, northern, and central Thailand where Muslims reside. Thai governmental policies had both different and similar effects for Muslim education in these various regions. I conclude with an overview of the pluralistic and nationalistic tendencies which have influenced education and development, and created tension between Buddhists and Muslims in Thailand.

Modernization and Education in Thailand

Although the term modernization has had various meanings and usages (Nash 1984), despite reservations, the process of social, economic, political, religious, and ideological change that accompanied western penetration in Thailand is still best described to with this term. Beginning with King Mongkut's reign (1851-1869) historical changes leading to dramatic upheavals within Thai society were induced by Western impact. Increasing urbanization, the transformation of the absolute monarchy to a military-civilian bureaucratic polity, and Thailand's substantial participation in the world economy as a major rice exporting center all contributed towards these dramatic changes. David Wyatt in a comprehensive account of this period demonstrates how these modern changes effected the educational system in Thailand (1969, 1975).

The income produced from the rice export fueled the educational innovations which were initially undertaken and sponsored by the monarchy in the nineteenth century. The monarch who contributed most substantially to the modernization of education was Chulalongkorn (1868-1910). One measure to prevent the direct colonization of Thailand was the changes in education sponsored by Chulalongkorn and his brother Prince Damrong. In perhaps the most profound change for Thai society these two brothers introduced new schools borrowed from the Western elitist model and curricula which more than anything led to the consolidation of new social groupings in Thai society who began to direct the modernization of the polity (Wyatt 1969: 35-385, 1975 125).

The traditional educational system of Thailand had restricted social mobility to those of royal descent and sons of nobles, Nai. But after Chulalongkorn's reforms the educational system offered opportunities for those individuals of many social backgrounds. The rapid transformation of Thai society created a demand for manpower which had to be recruited on the basis of meritocratic principles rather than descent. Within Bangkok, the area most directly affected by modernization during this period, new skills and ideas were needed to implement these new changes. Universal education incorporating the scientific and secular ideals of the West began to be seen by this new

class of modernizers as the stimulus for the creation of a society which was not completely dependent upon the colonizing West.

The traditional educational system in Thailand was inextricably bound with the Theravada Buddhist religious institutions, the Sangha. Education and religion were mutually interdependent. Young males were educated in the wat where it was customary to enter the monkhood for some period of their lives and receive an elementary introduction to reading and writing. With the modernization of the educational institutions and the introduction of a compulsory nationwide system of education, the monastic organization, the Sangha began to play a less important role in modern education.

As Tambiah (1978) and Keyes (1971, 1987) have noted, the Thai secular authorities incorporated the Sangha into the Thai bureaucratic polity as a means of legitimizing state policies. By the 1930s, the traditional wat- centered Buddhist based educational system was becoming increasingly secularized. Secular teachers trained in institutions guided by the Thai Ministry of Education began to displace the monks (Keyes 1987). These secular teachers inspired by the reformist and modernist climate introduced students to the new skills and ideas resulting from western contact.

Despite a movement towards increasing secularization in the Thai educational system, other governmental policies

served to inhibit this tendency. The modernizing Thai bureaucratic polity was involved in nation-building. To do so, the Thai state centered in Bangkok, concentrated upon incorporating outlying provinces into the polity, and assimilating other populations into a culturally homogenized nation. Thai nationalism was an interrelated aspect of the ongoing modernizing trends. The father of Thai nationalism, King Vajiravudh, the son of Chulalongkorn, designated 'Thai Buddhism' along with 'Thai culture', and the 'Thai monarchy' as the three pillars of Thai nationalism.

These three symbolic pillars were used as the touchstone to construct a Thai nation and identity. This Thai nationalism was systematically reworked into a rigorous form of cultural hegemony through the policies of Phibun Songkram in the late 1930s and 40s. Part of this nationalistic campaign identified with Phibun was aimed at the Chinese and other minorities including Muslims in Thailand. Phibun following the models of totalitarian regimes such as Hitler in Germany, and Hirohito in Japan, adopted a concept of a racist nation based upon the Thai race (Thai Rathaniyom), and a cultural policy based upon specific Thai "Cultural Rules". These "Cultural Rules", and the three symbolic pillars of nationhood were to be spread through the educational system and state ceremonies as a means of creating bureaucratic legitimacy throughout the nation (Numnonda 1978).

Thus, although secular teachers began to replace the Buddhist monks as the instructors in the educational system with modernization throughout Thailand, state Buddhism simultaneously became an inherent aspect of the governmentally sponsored educational curriculum. Along with the adoption of new scientific methods and secular ideas from the West, Thai Buddhism was established as the foundation of Thai educational philosophy. Thai Buddhist values, concepts, and practices were integrated into the educational curriculum. This was an extremely effective national policy in producing nationhood and cultural identity for peoples in the north, northeast, east, and west regions of Thailand. Most of these people had been practicing Buddhists prior to their incorporation into the Thai state. Thai Buddhism, as a pillar of Thai cultural and national identity served to facilitate the unification of the Thai polity. Yet, this same national policy also served to alienate an important religious minority in Thailand, the Muslim minority.

Muslim Education and Modernization in South Thailand

The modernization of Thai education has had profound consequences for the Muslims based in southern Thailand in the Patani region. A number of Thai scholars have surveyed the impact of the Thai educational policies on the Muslims of South Thailand. Drawing upon the ethnographic studies

done by Geertz (1960) and others in Southeast Asia, Surin Pitsuwan, in a highly original contribution, develops an evolutionary history of the pondok as it emerged from indigenous guru and ashram based institutions of the pre-Islamic period in this Malay area (1985). Surin views the pondok as parallel to the Buddhist wat in providing the basic enculturation of individuals within the wider society. The pondoks were sacred centers within the Malay Muslim villages of this southern Thai region and became the preeminent symbols of Malay Muslim Islamic ideals and culture. The pondok was the traditional institution which reinforced cultural and ethnic identity for the Muslim population of this southern area of Thailand.

The traditional curriculum of the pondok was based on the classical model of the madrasah, the traditional educational institutions of the Islamic world. The teachers, the To Khru were trained in the Islamic sciences, and many possessed a knowledge of classical Arabic and Jawi (Malay with Arabic script). Pitsuwan lists the typical subjects which include (Qira-at), recitation of the Quran, (tafsir), exegesis of the religious texts, (Hadith), learning the traditions of the Prophet, (usul al-Fiqh), jurisprudence, (Fiqh), learning the details of Islamic law, (nahwi and sarf), grammar and conjugation, (tauhid or usul al-din), theology, (mantiq), logic, (tarikh), history, (tasauwuf), mysticism, and (akhlaq) ethics. In the

curriculum there was no examination and no time limit for students to graduate from their course of study. Students who became proficient in these subjects would teach them to new students or students who were behind.

There was no explicit political purpose within the pondoks. The concern of the pondok based upon the above curriculum was pervasively religious and spiritual. Like its counterpart, the wat in other areas of Thailand, the pondok encouraged village cohesiveness, social harmony, and was tied to other communal Islamic rituals and practices such as the celebration of Islamic holidays and life cycle events. This traditional education was non-vocational, and did not have the aim of creating an educational elite to govern the villages. The pondoks produced religious leaders, ulama, and religious teachers, To Khru, to officiate in Islamic jurisprudence procedures, ritual celebrations, and instruct in religious teachings.

Beginning in the early twentieth century the Thai state progressively extended its political hegemony into southern Thailand. These hegemonic developments had begun as far back as the fourteenth century, but accelerated in the early part of this century. With the penetration of western colonialism and interests (especially British interests in Malay areas), the Thai monarchical elite moved quickly to absorb these southern vassal states which contained resources and a population to provide prosperity and

security for the Thai bureaucratic state. Eliminating the local base of power in the southern regions and extending the bureaucratic apparatus of the Thai polity into the region became the preeminent strategy of the Thai monarchical elite. Thai nationalism emphasizing the three pillars of nation, king, and religion, became the ideology of the bureaucratic establishment and was developed as the basis of a cultural hegemony.

As the Thai polity expanded into this southern region, it promoted modernized educational policies aimed at transforming the traditional pondok for explicit political purposes. With the National Education System Acts of the 1930s, the Thai authorities intended to instill both democratic and Siamese cultural values throughout the various regions of Thailand through compulsory education. These Education Acts were first restricted to primary education (grades 1-4) and were aimed at promoting literacy and modern secularized education. But more directly Thai authorities would be able to monopolize the political control over education in order to assert Thai cultural hegemony over these regions.

One Education Act in 1936 gave the government power to control and administer examinations to the teachers and to award diplomas, to adminster examinations to students at the completion of primary, junior high, and senior high schools. All the textbooks used in public schools were to be prepared

by the Ministry of Education. Another Act of 1945, the "Patronage of Islam Act", attempted to control the ulama by drawing them into the official bureaucratic network. In other words, just as the bureaucratic polity had subsumed the Sangha for legitimacy purposes, the Thai secular authorities intended the same formula for the Muslim officials and teachers. Through this "Patronage Act" the pondoks, the ulama, the mosque councils, were centralized under the authority of the Chularajmontri, the official position in the Thai bureaucracy through the Ministry of Interior (Pitsuwan 1985). One explicit clause of the Act which allowed the Minister of Interior to appoint and dismiss ulama in order to insure loyalty symbolized the real intentions of Thai authorities.

As is obvious these educational Acts created fundamental dilemmas for the Malay Muslims of this southern region. The Thai compulsory education system was based upon the Thai language, a language foreign to most of the Malay Muslims of the South, and upon Buddhist values, which were intimately associated with a traditional monastic curriculum developed by the Buddhist Sangha. Therefore, in the eyes of many Muslims in these southern provinces to become involved as a citizen participating in the Thai polity necessitated a rejection of one's language and religion. Malay Muslim parents objected strongly to purely Thai education and language, and the undermining of the traditional pondok

system. They feared that their children would be won over to Buddhism and would forget their native Malay tongue.

During the 1930s the assimilationist educational policies of the Thai polity were carried out under the guise of 'democracy' associated with the civilian government of Pridi. As the Thai state became less democratic during the 1940s, and into the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the educational policies directed at the southern Muslim region were symbolically associated with socioeconomic development or patanakorn. As the Thai authorities began to perceive the pondok as the key institution in transmitting Malay religious and political ideology in the South, their aim was to transform this institution into a secular instrument for development purposes. At the same time most Thai authorities assumed that patanakorn, or socioeconomic development, would lead to the Thaicization of these Malay regions, and that Buddhist symbols would eventually become predominant.

In 1961, the Ministry of Education initiated a plan to regulate further the pondoks. A research and coordinating center was established in Yala in order to secularize the pondoks and introduce Thai language instruction, policies which were embedded in the strategy of patanakorn. The curriculum was restructured for the pondok, and by the end of 1970, there were 463 pondoks in the South which were formally incorporated into the Thai government program

(Pitsuwan 1985). The textbooks were in the Thai language and the curriculum included geography, Thai history, Malay language (although eventually the Malay language was taken out of the curriculum), arithmetic, and Buddhist ethics. By the time of the 1970s there were changes in the curriculum to include courses in civics, geography, sciences, health, drawing, handicraft, physical education, boy scout training for boys, and Red Cross training for girls. The schools were expanded to grade 7 (Prachuabmoh 1980).

Pitsuwan describes three perspectives which informed Thai government policy towards educating the Malay Muslims of southern Thailand (1985). The three perspectives were held by some liberal politicians, such as Kukrit Pramoj, by security officials, and by education officials. The liberal politicians felt that the secularization-Buddhist education policies were ill-defined because they did not reflect Malay Muslim language and religious culture. The security officials assumed that all minorities in Thailand must assume a "Thai" identity for national integration, whereas the education officials thought that the government had not demonstrated that a secular education would offer the best chances for patanakorn or socioeconomic development for Muslim youth. Up until recently, the military bureaucratic officials have overruled any liberal sentiments in dealing with the southern Malay problem.

The assimilationist view of educational policy which dominated Thai military and bureaucratic policy formulation was based upon contradictory principles. On the one hand, the secular goals were ideologically "pluralistic", based upon non-religious content. Yet, the stress on the Thai curriculum implicitly enforced religious content based upon Buddhist philosophy. This educational pattern would have the effects of squeezing out the traditional subjects (based upon the Islamic tradition) taught in the pondok. Pitsuwan reveals through his analysis of Malay sources that the religious teachers and leaders, the ulama, did not simply submit to these overbearing policies, but rather they selectively cooperated and participated in a very restrained manner. Since the ulama could not legally operate their own pondoks any longer, they opted to cooperate in the hopes of avoiding too much government (Buddhist) interference in their religious affairs.

The educational policies promoted by Thai authorities have created what one Thai scholar has referred to as "unintended outcomes" (Dulyakasem 1981). Instead of serving an integrative function in the creation of a nationally based, uniform, Thai cultural identity in these areas, it has had the opposite effect. It has led to irrendentism and separatism in the Malay Muslim regions of Thailand. Pitsuwan associates these secularizing-Buddhist, contradictory policies with the origins of overt

irrendentist movements such as PULO, the Patani United Liberation Organization, the most influential political resistance movement in South Thailand (1985). In addition, Malay Muslim parents began to send their children abroad for an Islamic education which engendered further separatist tendencies.

The introduction of the educational secular-Buddhist system in the southern Malay regions of Thailand undermined the basis of traditional religious legitimacy. The ulama and To Khru teachers and scholars were replaced by secular teachers, most of them Thai speakers from Bangkok, and other areas of Thailand. The secular-Buddhist education system was pitted against the Islamic religious schools (Dulyakasem 1984). Although the Buddhist Sangha did not resist the secularization policies in the traditional educational system, the ulama correctly perceived their displacement as an impingement upon their religious traditions. The traditional ulama were forced to cooperate in order to retain the autonomy of their Islamic religious goals. The threat of this Thai cultural hegemony to the integrity of Islam, has led to the degeneration of relations between the Muslim minority and Thai officials, thus provoking further communal strife.

Furthermore, in respect to the goals of socioeconomic development, or patanakorn, these educational policies have also been a failure (Suhrke 1970, Haemindra 1977,

Prachuabmoh 1980). In general, as could be expected, most of the Malay Muslim students have not become fluent in the Thai language. It is not their native language, and in most cases the Thai language is not used outside of the classroom. Until recently, because of the Muslim hostility to the imposed educational system, many of the Muslim students would drop out of the system before reaching the fourth year of elementary education. Despite recognition of the utilitarian value of a Thai education on the part of some of the Muslim parents, the religious and ethnic primordial attachments have affected the rate of achievement of the Muslim students in the Thai educational system. In some sense these educational policies have intensified the problems of underdevelopment in southern Thailand.

In a recent analysis of the current educational policies of the Thai government regarding the southern Malay regions, the Thai scholar, Panomporn Anurugsa, finds that although there are some new innovations in curricula matters, the same kinds of assumptions still underlie Thai policy (1984). The ultimate goals of the Thai government is to make the Malay Muslims speak Thai, and to gain permanent control over the pondoks as a means of political integration. The present Thai government feels that what is required is a push for more forceful action into the pondoks. Education is the vanguard policy for political

integration of the southern provinces and this is the means to guarantee national security and stability.

However, the current Thai government has emphasized that this policy is a policy of accomodation rather than suppression. Once established, Islam, or in their terms "Thai Islam" should coexist peacefully with Thai Buddhism. The government claims that it encourages and supports Islam and that religious rituals and privileges should be granted to the Muslim population. To achieve their goals, the current government is directly intervening into the revision of curricula in all levels of education in the pondoks, expanding the management and administration of the pondoks, introducing the Thai language in religious studies, and teaching Islam in public schools in order to increase the rate of attendance among the Malay Muslim students (Anurugsa 1984).

The Thai Ministry of Education established a committee for revising the curriculum and administration of the pondoks in 1980. The policies developed differed from the previous policies of the 1970s, which focused on the secular curriculum for only the primary and middle levels of the pondoks. This new plan devised curriculum for every level which is called the Curriculum for the Study of Islam in 1980. The pondoks were organized into three levels: a primary level (1st through 4th years), the middle level (the fifth through seventh years), and the upper level (the

eighth through tenth year) which is devoted to religious education including training in Islamic law and jurisprudence.

Yet even these new policies devised by the Ministry of Education for the Malay Muslims are based upon the older assumptions of assimilationism. As Anurugsa emphasizes, the new curriculum was simply a means by which the government could legally control and oversee the processes going on in the pondoks in order to bring about political integration (1984: 259). Each morning the pondok instructors must lead their students in paying respect to the three pillars --the nation, the Buddhist religion, and the monarchy. This requisite is offensive to the Muslim students and teachers. And the Thai authorities have proposed that the language of instruction for the Quran and other Islamic texts be in Thai, rather than in Malay or Arabic. Though this policy is not yet in place, it has induced new dissent among the Muslim scholars and religious officials in the southern area.

In general the response of the To Khrus and ulama to these new educational policies has been a restrained participation. To preserve the study of Islam, they have complied with most of the new government regulations, but they have tried to emphasize Islamic teachings and reject much of the secular courses. This trend has led Thai authorities to establish systems of incentives rewards and

financial support to those pondoks which adopt secularization. This policy has had mixed results. On the one hand many of the larger pondoks have received awards and financial support from Thai authorities. On the other hand many Malay Muslim parents send their children to those pondoks who teach only Islamic subjects, or send them abroad to other Islamic countries and regions for education.

The new secular education policies developed by Thai authorities the southern Malay regions have not yet had the intended effects for political integration. Like previous policies these current attempts by Thai authorities have produced unintended outcomes. The policies have intensified the divisions that Astri Suhrke had dubbed as the "loyalists" and "separatists", between those who have become accomodated themselves to Thai hegemony, and those who have rejected this political and cultural hegemony (1977). The loyalists have been drawn to the incentives offered by Thai authorities such as financial support, scholarships for Muslim students, appointments to provincial administrative posts, and nominal sponsorship of religious activities. The separatists have rejected the secularizing trends of the educational policies and have been drawn to the Islamic fundamentalist (da-wah) and irrendentist movements operating in Southern Thailand.

Muslim Education in Central and Northern Thailand

The 300,000 Muslims residing in Central and Northern Thailand have had a much different educational, political, and cultural experience than those in South Thailand. The majority of this population is descended from the Malay Muslims who were transported as hostages and prisoners from the southern Islamic Patani region during the years of rebellion in the nineteenth century. Other Muslims residing in Bangkok include Iranians who migrated to Thailand originally in the seventeenth century, and Indians, Pakistanis, Bengla Deshans, Indonesians, Chams, and Pathans who came to Thailand during different periods. In Northern Thailand, in Chiangmai and its adjacent areas live 2,500 Pakistani and around 30,000 Yunnanese Muslims originally from southern China who established Islamic communities in this Buddhist region (Soonthornpasuch 1977, Forbes 1986).

Because of their residence in the heartland of the Thai Buddhist environment in Central and Northern Thailand, these various Muslim populations have assimilated to varying extent into mainstream Thai culture. Thai has become the native language for all of these Muslim groups, and outside of religion, they have accomodated themselves to the dominant Thai majority culture. Despite this assimilation, most of these Muslims have remained deeply attached to their

Islamic heritage and have developed educational institutions to transmit these traditions to their children.

Two patterns of education exist for the Muslims of Bangkok. The greatest percentage of the Muslim population attend the religious schools which are attached to the neighborhood mosque. There are approximately 140 mosques with these accompanying religious schools in Bangkok. Most of the Muslim children attend the same public primary schools as other Thai children. After normal school hours in the early evening hours, Muslim children also attend the religious school maintained by their community mosque. In addition the school is in session for a few hours on the weekends. This part-time religious instruction includes the teaching of some Arabic (for reciting from the Islamic texts), Quranic and Hadith teachings, and proper instruction in ritual and prayer techniques. These schools are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education which is strictly regulated by the Thai government.

The other type of Islamic school is similar to the classical madrasah, full-time pondoks devoted to the study of Islamic religious teaching with a curriculum similar to the one's described by Pitsuwan for southern Thailand (see above). In 1977, there were ten of these pondoks in Bangkok, but since the resurgence of Islam, (corresponding to worldwide Islamic trends), the number of these institutions has been growing. In addition, an Islamic

College was established in Bangkok during the late 1940s for private higher education for the Muslim population in Thailand.

In Northern Thailand part-time religious schools similar to those in Bangkok, attached to the mosque, were established for the Yunnanese and Pakistani Muslim communities. Soonthornpasuch notes that during the 1970s in the Pakistani settlement the mosque schools had recruited their teachers from pondok-trained teachers in southern Thailand (1977). Simultaneously, the Yunnanese Muslim community in addition to strengthening their mosque based religious school, developed a pondok known as the Chitpakdee school for training Muslim students in order to be able to attend an Arabic educational institution in various Middle Eastern countries. It is obvious that Islamic education is perceived as an extremely important institution in promoting Islamic culture and identity in Northern Thailand.

Governmental educational policies which influenced developments in southern Thailand had similar consequences for Islamic education in Central and North Thailand. The Ministry of Education intended to implement a uniform standard curriculum and educational program for all Thai citizens irrespective of religious or ethnic differences. Thai authorities developed educational policies for furthering nationalistic interests, emphasizing the three symbolic pillars of nationhood, along with secular courses

based upon Western models. Direct control of curriculum and administrative matters were enforced by Thai authorities. And the Muslim pondoks and part-time religious schools education were carefully monitored by Thai authorities.

The consequences of these government policies were somewhat different for these Muslims in Central and North Thailand. For example, unlike the southern Malay Muslim area the question of language did not become a divisive issue for these Muslims. Thus, even in the religious schools in Central and North Thailand the instruction was carried out in Thai. The Quran and other Islamic texts had been translated into Thai since the 1950s by Ibrahim Queryshi (Direk Kulsriswasd), and others, and had been used in religious teaching and instruction for some time. Although there had been some resistance to the adoption of Thai as the language for religious instruction and services, most of the religious leaders accepted this innovation out of practical necessity.

On the other hand, there were some similar problems faced by these Muslims in Central and North Thailand that had been encountered by their religious brethren in South Thailand. The Buddhist symbolism and philosophy which was incorporated into the standard Thai curriculum for public, as well as private educational institutions were perceived as threatening by the Islamic communities. Buddhist values and practices, symbolic of Thai cultural identity,

represented intolerance and direct interference in the religious heritage and identity of this Islamic religious minority attempting to accomodate to Thai culture. Historically, periods of heightened nationalism such as the Phibun period of the late 1930s and 40s were particularly difficult for the Muslim minority in these Thai Buddhist environments.

The leaders of the Muslim community in these Buddhist areas have taken steps to deal with the educational policies promoted by Thai authorities by working through the Office of the Chularajmontri (and the Religious Affairs Department of the Department of Education). Leaders such as Ibrahim Queryshi, Direk Kulsriswasd, have begun to work closely with the Ministry of Education in attempting to modify the curriculum for the public schools, and developing appropriate Islamic texts for use in the private schools which would not be as offensive to the Muslim minority in these Buddhist areas. This project is in its initial stages of development, and the Muslim minority is closely monitoring its progress.

Secular and Religious Education in Thailand

As described above, with modernization and western influences in Thailand secularization trends effected education. King Mongkut through early contacts with western ideas and missionaries adopted certain Protestant views

toward religion. He stressed that religious belief was based upon a matter of conviction, rather than received traditions or rituals. This view provided the foundation for a reformist Buddhist movement later institutionalized by his son Prince Vajiranana. This reform Buddhism movement was flexible enough to incorporate new western secular cosmological and naturalistic views of the universe (Keyes 1987: 182). Secularization trends began with these nineteenth century developments and have continued in Thailand up to the present. These secular trends were acceptable to the Sangha, as indicated by the lack of resistance to the replacement of the monks by lay secular teachers as discussed above.

And yet, these secular trends were accompanied by the promotion of a Thai national and cultural identity based upon Buddhist ideals. Undoubtedly, this helps explain the easy acceptance of secularization trends within Thai Buddhism. Unlike secularization in the west following the Reformation, the bourgeois revolutions, and the Enlightenment which involved anti-clerical and anti-religious movements which brought about a separation of church and state, Thai Buddhism and the Sangha has not been threatened by secular trends. The conflict between reason and faith did not arise in Thailand in the same way it did in the West. Thus, the incorporation of scientific and naturalistic views did not present a definitive challenge to

the Buddhist-based curriculum institutionalized within the educational system in Thailand.

Just as a reformist Buddhist tradition developed in nineteenth-century Thailand, an Islamic reformist movement evolved among the Muslim population in Thailand in the early part of the twentieth century. An outgrowth of western expansion in Islamic areas in the Near East and elsewhere, these reformist movements emerged within the urban educated Muslim population in Southeast Asia in cities such as Singapore, Jakarta, and Kuala Lumpur. Bangkok Muslims were inevitably influenced by these reformist tendencies. The new opportunities in Thai education (discussed above) created a class of Muslim intellectuals who, like their Buddhist counterparts, were becoming cognizant of the new scientific ideas and practices which inspired modernist and secular developments in Thailand. Though reformist Islam did not become institutionalized in the same way that reformist Buddhism did through the Thammayut monastic organization, the ideals of these reformist Muslims began to penetrate all aspects of Islamic culture in Thailand (Scupin 1980).

The reformist Muslim movements began to assert itself with respect to traditional forms of Islamic education. The traditional educational system based in the pondok was oriented to rural village life. Traditional Islamic education had been focused upon the memorization of the

Quran, and Islamic ritual cycles for the Muslim villagers. The Islamic modernist-reformist movement was organized by urban leaders who had been exposed to western ideals and practices. Like the Buddhist reformers, they wanted to restructure the Islamic educational institutions incorporating modern methods of teaching and curricula which would include science, math, and other vocational subjects in order to educate Muslims for modern socioeconomic development. Different ideological impulses flowed from the Muslim modernist rhetoric. On the one hand they felt that Muslims in Southeast Asia must adjust to the ongoing modernizing and westernizing forces through the use of reason, akal (Arabic) along with faith. Conversely, these reformists believed that if Muslims could combine reason, faith, and learning from the West, they could bring about their independence from the West.

But as the preceding discussion and description of Islamic education has indicated, the reconciliation of reason and faith, or secular tendencies has not been as easily acceptable for the Muslim population as it has for the Buddhist populace. Secular education in Thailand is synonymous with secular-Buddhist education. Nationalistic policies aimed at bureaucratic legitimacy were combined with secular processes. The Buddhist Sangha has not been placed in a situation of having to protect its traditional role in the educational setting within Thailand. But the Muslim

ulama perceive the secularization policies as an extension of cultural hegemony and a direct threat to and interference in their religious affairs. The Muslim minority view identify secularization in Thailand with the implicit expansion of Thai Buddhist culture.

Conclusion

Global modernization accompanied by industrialization trends, either capitalist or socialist inspired, has produced secular tendencies and fundamentalist ideologies in western and non-western societies. Various societies in the West, including the U.S., (or perhaps predominantly the U.S.), which have political traditions emphasizing the separation of church and state still have difficulties in accomodating the consequences of secularization. Modernizing scientific cosmological ideals and individualistic norms tend to dislocate primordial ties whether based upon ethnic or religious communities. As evidenced in the West and the East these modernizing trends have engendered fundamentalist religious movements. In most cases this religious resurgence can be viewed as an attempt to reappropriate a traditional moral, cultural, and communal ideology in the midst of rapid social change.

Since the nineteenth century Southeast Asian societies, including Thailand has been engaged in adjusting to these modernizing trends and secularization. As is evident,

secularization has had an effect on Thai Buddhism, just as it is influencing Islamic thought and culture. Yet simultaneously, modernity has produced 'primordial' tendencies, or nationalistic communal responses in Thai society such as the ethnic chauvinistic policies imposed by Phibun in the 1930s and 1940s. This "Phibunism" was based upon the uniform nationalism inspired by Japanese and European modes of hegemony. On the one hand, "Phibunism" was a nation-building strategy, but it also paralleled fundamentalist or revivalistic religious movements in attempting to draw upon Thai cultural traditions (prapheenii) to create a communal society.

In his recent comprehensive assessment of Thai society, Keyes concludes that "most Thai would like to see these pillars [the nation, Buddhism, and the monarchy] support a large open structure with room for a diversity of peoples rather than a small one with reinforced walls as barriers to alien influences" (1987: 211). This pluralistic view is an represents an encouraging development for the Muslim minority in Thailand. And yet, "Phibunism" is still operative within some circles of the rightist factions within Thai society. It was evidenced during the 1970s in the militant Buddhist leadership of Kittivuddho, the nationalism of the Village Scouts, and the Red Gaur movements backed by military factions. These fundamentalist or primordialist elements within Thai society stress the

traditional Thai codes (prapheenii) and norms governing society. This Thai nationalism with quotients of anti-non-Thai, anti- non-Buddhist, and anti-Communist sentiments has been used as a communal ideology by the right.

Thus, secularization and modernization has engendered both pluralistic and monolithic assimilationist tendencies in Thai society, just as it has in the U.S. and elsewhere. As discussed above it has created problems for the development of Islamic education in Thailand. Although most Muslims are as enthusiatic about reconciling reason and faith, and bringing about socioeconomic development, or patanakorn, for their populations as Buddhists, the unique situation for Muslims residing in a culture which has an official policy based upon Buddhist ideals makes it extremely problematic. If in fact "most Thais" are devoted to developing an open pluralistic society, they must work in establishing a sensitive dialogue with their Muslim neighbors in order to bring about this goal.

References

Anurugsa, Panomporn
1984 Political Integration Policy in Thailand: The Case of the Malay Muslim Minority. Ph.D dissertation. University of Texas, Austin.

Dulyakasem, Uthai
1981 Education and Ethnic Nationalism: A Study of the Muslim-Malays in Southern Siam. Ph.D dissertation. Stanford University.

1984 "Muslim-Malay separatism in Southern Thailand: Factors underlying the political revolt" in Joo-Jock and Vani (eds.) Armed Separatism in Southeast Asia. Singapore: ISEAS.

Esposito, John and Donahue, John
1982 Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Federspiel, Howard
1970 Persatuan Islam: Islamic Reform in Twentieth Century Indonesia. Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program.

Forbes, Andrew
1986 "The "Cin-Ho" (Yunnanese Chinese) Muslims of North Thailand", in Journal: Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs 7, (2): 173-186.

Geertz, Clifford
1960 The Religion of Java. New York: The Free Press.

Haemindra, N.
1977 "The Problem of the Thai-Muslims in the four Southern Provinces of Thailand (Part II) in Journal of Southeast Asian Studies 8, (1): 85-105.

Keyes, Charles
1971 "Buddhism and National Integration in Thailand" in Asian Studies 30: 551-568.

1987 Thailand: Buddhist Kingdom as Modern Nation-State. Boulder and London: Westview Press.

Nagata, Judith
1980 "The New Fundamentalism: Islam in Contemporary Malaysia" in Asian Thought and Society 5: 128-141.

1984 The Reflowering of Malaysian Islam: Modern Religious Radicals and Their Roots. Vancouver: University of British Columbia.

Noer, Deliar
1973 The Modern Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942. London: Oxford University Press.

Numnonda, Thamsook
1978 "Pibulsongkram's Thai Nation-Building Programme during the Japanese Military Presence, 1941-1945" in Journal of Southeast Asian Studies 9 (2):234-47

Peacock, James
1978 Muslim Puritans: Reformist Psychology in Southeast Asian Islam Berkeley: UC Press.

Pitsuwan, Surin
1985 Islam and Malay Nationalism: A Case Study of the Malay-Muslims of Southern Thailand. Thai Kadai Research Institute. Thammasat University.

Prachuamob, Chavivun
1980 The Role of Women in Maintaining Ethnic Identity and Boundaries: A Case of Thai Muslims (the Malay Speaking Group) In Southern Thailand. Ph.D dissertation. University of Hawaii.

Roff, William
1970 "Southeast Asian Islam in the Nineteenth century." in P.M. Holt et. al., The Cambridge History of Islam Vol 2 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scupin, Raymond
1980 "The Politics of Islamic Reformism in Thailand." in Asian Survey 20:1223-35

Siegal, James T.
1969 The Rope of God. Berkeley and Los Angeles. UC Press.

Soonthronpasuch, Suthep
1977 Islamic Identity in Chiengmai City: A Historical and Structural Comparison of Two Communities. Ph.D dissertation. University of California Berkeley.

Suhrke, Astri
1977 "Loyalists and Separatists: The Muslims in Southern Thailand". in Asian Survey 17: 237-50.

Tambiah, Stanley
1978 "Sangha and Polity in Modern Thailand: An Overview," in Smith, B (ed.) Religion and Legitimation of Power. Chambersburg, Anima Books

Wyatt, David
1969 The Politics of Reform in Thailand: Education in the Reign of King Chulalongkorn. New Haven: Yale University Press.

1975 "Education and the Modernization of Thai Society" in Skinner, G. William, and A. Thomas Kirsch (eds.) Change and Persistence in Thai Society: Essays in Honor of Lauriston Sharp. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.